

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

VOLUME IV.

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 1914

NUMBER 31

The Ruffed Grouse.

BY E. H. S.

WE had been told just where we would find it. "Go down the lane that leads to the lake, turn off to the right in the field below the orchard. There you will find the beginning of the ravine, and in a small side hollow, full of sumachs and just beneath one tree bent sideways, you will see the nest. And it has nine eggs in it! Such beauties, too! Sport and I were out with the gun when we came upon it. Yes, it is just in plain sight. Why, we almost stepped on it. No, there is no need for me to go along. Follow the directions, and you can't help finding it."

Thus were we told. But we found, to our dismay and chagrin, that telling is one thing and discovering another. I wonder, if Columbus had been told just *where* to find America, if he would have done so? By the way, did you ever try to find a grouse's nest, especially if the hen were sitting on it? Try it some time, but be sure to have your eyes trained in discerning different shades of brown and gray.

We did exactly as we were told,—down the lane past the orchard and across the field, found the ravine and the small gully on one side—but not the nest. There were three of us, and for the first half hour we were very quiet, speaking in whispers and, when we moved, making no noise.

It seemed such a restful, peaceful place for a home as we sat there. The sunlight flickering on the sumach leaves, the gray branches, the ferns, and pungent odor of the woods. Oh, yes, little mother, you did wise to choose this spot to rear your family, and we sincerely hope an enemy will have even a more difficult time finding you than we.

The thought of passing time, however, stirred us to quicker motion, and suddenly there flew straight out of the hill-side not two yards from where we had been resting, the bird itself. It would not have surprised us more had she flown *at* us instead of away from us, for she went like a flash. We then had a good chance to see the eggs. Nine pretty light brown ones, about the size of a large crab-apple. The nest was perhaps a foot in diameter, and a prettier sight you never saw. Ferns and grasses growing near, the side of the hill for a background, and over all the gray branch of sumach.

We wondered why we hadn't noticed it before, but that is the hen's secret. You know she is just the color of the

ground and brown leaves, some dark feathers and some light; and, sitting on the nest with outspread wings covering the eggs, it is difficult to distinguish her from the surroundings.

Of course we knew better than to touch the eggs, but went on down the lane to the shore of the lake where we remained over an hour, watching the water and the distant boats. One of our party spoke of the "drumming" sound for which the grouse is noted. The sound is not made in its throat, as some people think, but is produced by rapidly beating the wings. Its nest is on the ground in the woods, principally of leaves, and usually concealed by a log or thick bushes. But, if molested, the female has been known to lay her eggs in a crow's nest out of harm's way; but this probably occurs very seldom.

Turning homeward, we hoped to find the grouse back on her nest, but doubted it. However, on quietly approaching the nest from the opposite side of the ravine, much to our delight there she sat. We had our field-glasses along and took many good looks at her ere we left. I think she saw us, but never seemed to move a muscle or a feather. We thought on another visit to find some of the young ones, as nothing would have pleased us more than to see that proud mother walking off, followed by a brood of nine; but we can only imagine it and hope that all were hatched and lived and grew and prospered, finally having families of their own.



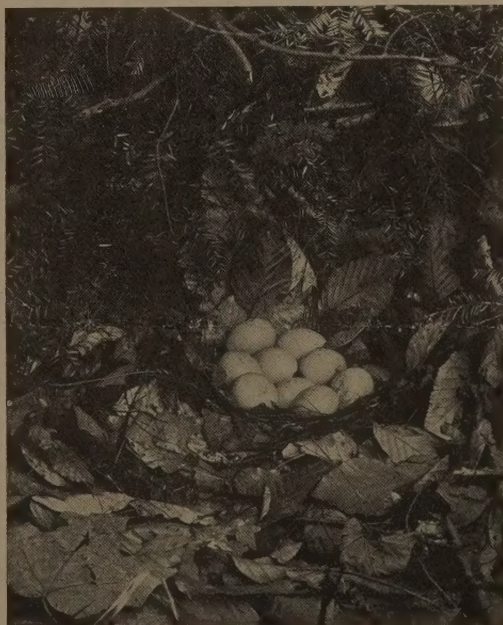
And after April, when May follows,
And the white-throat builds, and all the
swallows!
Hark! where my blossomed pear-tree in the
hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops at the bent spray's
edge.

ROBERT BROWNING.

The Country Boy's Creed.

I BELIEVE that the country, which God made, is more beautiful than the city, which man made; that life out of doors and in touch with the earth is the natural life of man. I believe that work is work wherever we find it, but that work with Nature is more inspiring than work with the most intricate machinery. I believe that the dignity of labor depends, not on what you do, but on how you do it; that opportunity comes to a boy on the farm as often as to a boy in the city; that life is larger and freer and happier on the farm than in town; that my success depends not upon my location, but upon myself; not upon my dreams, but upon what I actually do; not upon luck, but upon pluck. I believe in working when you work, and in playing when you play, and in giving and demanding a square deal in every act of life.

EDWIN OSGOOD GROVER.



THE RUFFED GROUSE'S NEST.

Photo by James P. Langley.

BLUEBIRD'S knocking at the door,
Swallow's hither coming;
And o'er all the sunny mead
Springtime bees are humming.

HELEN B. CURTIS.

Birds with Many Names.

BY WALTER K. PUTNEY.

IN looking over a bird-book the other day I was surprised to find out how many different birds could claim half a dozen or more names each. I had known that a few could be called by that number without being accused of extravagance, but the total is larger than one has any idea. Half a dozen or more! Yes, indeed! Another book gave me the names of certain birds that I have never seen—birds that do not come here very often except by mere chance; here I found birds of names that go up into double figures. The surf-scooter, a bird commonly called the coot,—years ago very, very numerous at my home at Gloucester,—claims sixteen different names; its cousin, the American scoter or black coot, can be called in fourteen different ways if he would answer to every name that has been given to him; another relation, the white-winged scoter, while owning only eight names, has the distinction of getting named, each sex differently, the male being known as the black whitewing, and the female the gray whitewing. In sections where they are well known they are both often referred to as the Uncle Sam Coot. But of all the names given to various members of this family those applied to the surf-scooter "take the cake"! Here they are: gray coot, horsehead, skunk-bill, skunkhead, skunktop (these names because of the peculiar color markings of the head), surfer, google-nose, patchhead, patch-polled coot, pictured-bill, plaster-bill, snuff-taker, butter-boat-billed coot, hollow-billed coot, and brown coot. Isn't that a variety!

But the above-named birds are not real coots, although they are commonly called so. The real coot—the only one entitled to the name—has a collection of thirteen different names. Mud-hen, white-billed mud-hen, meadow-hen, marsh-hen, water-hen, pond-hen, crowbill, pond-crow, sea-crow, water-chicken, blue Peter, and Pelick are its other names. Perhaps some readers will now recognize this bird; if you do by any of these names, just remember that this is the only real coot found in this country, and all of the others, such as the pied-winged coot, gray coot, broad-billed coot, pumpkin-blossom coot, whistling coot, etc., are not coots at all, but scoters, or surf-ducks.

But then, why give the credit for name collecting to the coots and near-coots? Here is the ruddy duck, for example. This little fellow was once a bird of large numbers; certain sections of the eastern part of this country considered this duck a table delicacy, but the West and Middle States, as well as down South, did not serve him on toast or otherwise, and the bird flourished and increased in size; pretty soon, or not many years ago, traveling tourists began to demand this bird, and so he was introduced into the markets all over the country. To-day he is found seldom but his names are found everywhere, and among them are dumb-bird, sleepy-head, dipper, dapper, dopper, toughhead, and hard-headed broadbill.

The golden plover may feel equally proud of thirteen names, while the ruddy turn-

stone (better known as the chicken-plover or red-legs) and the red-backed sandpiper, each boast of eleven. The Knot (if you are not acquainted with him you perhaps recognize him as the red-breasted or silver plover), the Old Squaw and the Greater Yellow Legs are classed with those having nine names, and the hooded merganser, northern phalarope, and black-breasted plover each have eight different names.

In a list made in somewhat of a hurried scanning of several of the best texts, I find six with seven names, and fifteen with an even half-dozen names. It is a very odd fact that most of these birds of so many names are shore-birds and water-fowl; the song-birds do not have as many names or so many reasons for such a variation in nomenclature, although the flicker leads all kinds and classes with more than thirty different names to its credit.

Heads, colorings, and movements seem to be the chief reasons for name-giving, although a few have a "tail" to tell in their names. Here is the pintail, that graceful gray duck; he is also called the sprigtail, or picket-tail. Behold the bluebill, the broadbills of many kinds, the ringbills, the copper-bill, skunk-bill, pictured-bill, plaster-bill, and many, many others! In the line of noses (yes, some authors evidently believe that birds do have noses!) we find google-nose, copper-nose, butter-nose, muddy-nose, and snuff-taker! As to wings, I haven't found anything satisfactory or odd enough to mention, but when we hunt for "legged" birds we can find any number of names that are very appropriate, among them being red-legs, summer yellowleg, winter yellowleg, plain yellowleg, and blackleg. Heads attract a considerable amount of attention, not only because of coloration, but because of some fancied characteristic; chuckle-head, sleepy-head, toadhead, greenhead, great-head, bottle-head, beetle-head, bullhead, skunk-head, and horsehead are by no means far-fetched.

Some names are re-formations; take, for example, dipper, dapper, and dopper, which are all applied to the same bird, and patridge, which is a very common name used instead of partridge. Other names, like three-toes, humility, dumb-bird, simpleton, stilt, and blue Peter (this latter so named because of its manner of seeming to walk on the water like Peter of Biblical times),—these are all fairly well understood, but what fancy ever suggested such names as tip-up, stib, tell-tale, teeter, and gump?

A Song of Spring.

BY ELSIE L. LUSTIG (AGE 15).

I come to tell
Of a magic dell
I found in the forest green,
Where brownies gay
With fairies play
Merrily round their queen.

I come to sing
Of the elfin king
In his ghost-like life of gloom;
Where trolls do mine
Much silver fine,
Where flowers can never bloom.

I come to bring
The joys of spring
With the beauties of each day;
When forest trees
Bend in the breeze,
And everything's glad, always!

The Brown Thrush Sings.

FOOLISH folk with your idle fears
And slow of heart through all the years,
As the Master saith, Why worry so
Over the things which we cannot know
And over the ways we have to go?

Why are your hearts sore troubled still
And filled with a dreamed-of dread of ill?
"Ye believe in God—believe in me,"
The Master saith, who knows and cares
For the sparrow still and how it fares.

Though ways be dark and ways be long,
Each by-way has its bit of song.
The Master has said, "Be of good cheer;
Lo, I am with you always here."
So put away your faltering fear.

The hedgerow thrush sings with the lark
At sunrise; at sunset dares the dark
And sings on into the night, for sheer
Joy of singing, sweet, strong and clear,
Without one quavering note of fear.

So would I live though days are dark;
So would I rise up with the lark
And fear no evil, nor what life brings
Of good or ill of earthly things,
While through it all the brown thrush sings.

CHARLES BLANCHARD.

Sunday School News.

[Owing to the Editor's absence, some interesting news items received some time ago are only now given to our readers.]

THE secretary of our Sunday school at Berkeley, Cal., Mr. Elliot Q. Adams, gives an interesting account of a chart-record of the attendance of classes. The chart is hung in a conspicuous place. The number of pupils present in the "star classes" (those having perfect attendance) is printed in gold; of the "honor classes" (80 per cent. or better), in red; and of other classes, in black. Names are dropped from the roll (a) on definite information that the member has left the school or (b) after four consecutive unexcused absences.

The four schools "around the Bay," San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland, and Alameda, have a banner, which is awarded each month to the school having the highest percentage of attendance during the preceding month. At the last report, San Francisco's school was in possession of the banner.

The new superintendent of the Greenfield (Mass.) Sunday school has taught the children the following motto, which they recite in concert:

"I am only one, but I am one.
I cannot do everything, but I can do something.
What I can do, I want to do, and by the help of
God I will do."

From Pittsburgh, Pa., comes the good news that there are this year fourteen classes in the Sunday school. The Beacon Series of graded lessons is used. An adult class meets in the church auditorium, and welcomes to its sessions strangers and members of the church who are not members of the class.

The school is engaged in definite social service work. Each month the school pays, through the Associated Charities, the rent (\$5) for a widow who is working to support her three children. The birthday offerings go for the purchase of shoes and stockings for dependent children who are in need of clothing.

The Rescue of Lopwing.

BY HELEN M. RICHARDSON.

JACK BAKER'S grandfather was a ship-builder. He had once been a sea-captain; but ever since Jack could remember his grandfather had worked in this shipyard at the mouth of the Penobscot River, where the great waves often came rolling in with all the force of ocean breakers.

Jack's vacations were all spent in this attractive spot. He would follow his grandfather down to the yard in the morning; and, when he grew tired of watching the patient horse haul the huge timbers and the workmen shape them to the vessel's side, he would wander down to the shore and watch the waves tumble in over the rocks. Of this he never grew weary.

The sea-gulls grew fearless of the quiet little figure perched upon a rock that jutted out into the sea, and would flap their great wings almost in his face as they skimmed the water in search of food. These, together with the pleasure yachts shooting by and the more distant sails that seemed to touch the sky, were his only companions.

Jack could tell how many men it took to build a ship and how long they were building it. And he had so much to relate to his schoolmates upon his return that he was usually the center of an admiring group for weeks after. In fact, Jack Baker was authority for all the boys on questions pertaining to ship-building.

There was not a boy in school who did not know that a ship's masts were often ninety feet high; that the huge timbers that formed her inner ceiling were first shaped in steam-boxes, and then dragged to the ship's side by horses which also worked the pulley that lifted them to place; and that it took from a dozen to twenty men four months to build a ship.

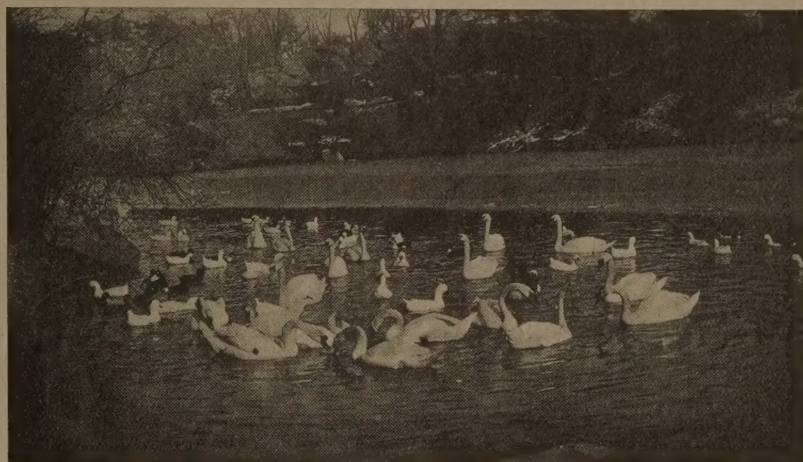
Jack was proud of this knowledge, which had been gained only by careful attention and observation. He also grew daring in his adventures along the rocky shore. His grandfather used to caution him against venturing too far out upon the rocks. "The tide will trap you some day, I am afraid. I should imagine by what you say that you had been half-way over to Negro Island," his grandfather said in a laughing tone. And Jack did not think it advisable to tell him that that was what he meant to do when he had learned to swim better.

One hot afternoon he slipped down to the shore for one of these swimming-lessons. He climbed to his favorite rock, which was one that jutted far out into the water, to wait until the tide was farther in. As he sat there his attention was attracted to a gull that suddenly dropped upon a rock close by, trailing a broken wing. He reached across and took the wounded bird in his hand.

"Grandfather could tell how to mend your wing, poor bird, but I cannot do it," Jack said in a pitying tone, stroking the glossy feathers.

The gull gave a sharp cry and struggled to free itself. Then, finding that its wing was useless, it fluttered down to the rock.

"I cannot leave the poor bird here to suffer," Jack reasoned, slipping from his lofty perch. But instead of landing where he had expected to, an incoming wave caught him, and he found himself tossing helplessly about in the water, his jacket and trousers preventing him from taking those long,



THE FRIENDLY SWANS.

graceful strokes he was learning so successfully.

With the scream of the wounded gull sounding in his ears, the lad sought to free himself from his hampering clothing that he might go to its assistance. But the water was cold, and he soon found that he was no match for the huge breakers that were constantly rolling in.

He closed his mouth tightly as his grandfather had cautioned him to do when under water, still tugging at his wet clothing; but he floundered aimlessly about and at last grew frightened, which only served to make his predicament more alarming.

Suddenly he saw something white bobbing about upon the surface of the water a short distance away. Through the blinding spray he discerned the trailing wing of the wounded gull. Then a wave hid the bird from view, while at the same time it carried Jack within easy reach of it.

"If a bird with a broken wing can float upon the water, I ought to be able to reach it by swimming," he reasoned, as he made a bold stroke outward.

Weighed down by his water-soaked garments, it was no easy task for the lad to grasp and hold the struggling, screaming bird. But the feat was accomplished, and Jack felt a thrill of joy run through his veins as he summoned his remaining strength to reach shore with his burden.

Meanwhile, his grandfather had caught sight of the struggling figure in the water, and was hastening to Jack's assistance. The gull gave a feeble cry of remonstrance as it felt itself being given into the keeping of another; while Jack, shivering from his long experience in the water, reached for a rock, and ran home to change his wet clothing, knowing that the bird would be well cared for during his absence. Every possible attention was given the suffering creature, and it spent the night upon the mast of an unfinished vessel in the shipyard, and there Jack found it in the morning.

For many days the gull made the shipyard its home, and it grew to be a great pet with all the men. They called it Lopwing, for its wing still continued to trail behind it. Grandfather Keep said he feared the bird's flying days were over. It grew very tame, and would follow Jack like a dog all around the yard, and would take food from his hand.

When the time came for him to return home the thought of leaving Lopwing made Jack very sad. His grandfather promised to do everything in his power to render the bird contented and happy in its new abiding-place; for it did not now appear as if it would ever be able to fly beyond the confines of the shipyard.

As Jack stepped aboard the steamer that was to bear him away the gull gave a shrill cry and made a frantic effort to follow him; and the last thing that the lad saw as the shore receded from view was the trailing wing of his pet as it drooped from the mast of a ship upon which it was perched.

When school opened Jack was more of a hero than ever to his admiring schoolmates. And they are all wondering if Lopwing will be there to greet him when he goes to Camden another summer.

"Sing on, sing on, blithe bird! and fill my heart with summer gladness."

More Bed-time Stories.

THE least little people in the homes to which *The Beacon* goes will be glad to know that Thornton W. Burgess has given them two more books of Bed-time Stories. These, like the first two volumes, deal with the little furred and feathered folk who live in the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. These delightful regions make the happy starting-point for the Land of Nod, and Peter Cottontail, Reddy Fox, and Unc' Billy Possum will surely make delightful companions for the children's dreams as well as for their waking hours. The publishers classify the books for children six years of age. One little maiden of four, on whom these stories have been tried, claims them at every bed-time hour, and carries the Peter Cottontail volume about with her in the daytime, telling the stories from the pictures. May many little people in *Beacon* homes share her joy in these meadow and woodland companions.

Peter Cottontail, Unc' Billy Possum By Thornton W. Burgess. Vols. III. and IV. of the Bed-time Stories. Cloth, 50 cents net. Little, Brown & Co., Boston.

THE BEACON.

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From the Editor to You.

Bird Friends. "Do you know," said one of my boy chums to me one day, "this spring is the first time I have ever known that all birds do not look alike." We had been taking early morning walks together, watching the feathered visitors in our region and learning their names. He had begun to know some of his bird neighbors and make friends of them.

Any child who lives in the country or in a small town may have the birds as close friends. Only a little care is needed. Water for the birds to drink should be placed in dark-colored, shallow dishes. The large saucers which come with flower-pots are excellent for the purpose. These should be kept filled even in March, when the weather is still so cold that the water will freeze at night. The robins, grackles, fox-sparrows, and blue-birds come early, and you want to see them on their arrival. A little mixed bird-seed scattered on the lawn at twilight in the early spring days will bring a crowd of visitors in the early morning. Sparrows? Yes; but there are many sorts. You will soon find the white-throated sparrow, the vesper, the white-crowned, and the song-sparrow, in close companionship with the English sparrow, and learn to know them apart. In the dead leaves, under the shrubbery, you will see the brown thrasher and the towhee bunting. One wren-box, put up on a high pole in a sunny spot in your yard, will furnish more song to delight you all summer than a canary in a cage, and be far less trouble. Make friends of the birds. Know them by their names; learn their markings, and find what good companions they can be.

The Song within.

A young lad lay dying on a battle-field far from his home. To the Red Cross nurse who bent over him he whispered, "Tell my mother that I did my duty, and that I always kept the little bird singing in my heart."

Are you remembering to keep alive in your heart the little bird that sings of the wonder and beauty of life, of our trust that all is well even in the darkest hour, since God cares for us?

Victor Hugo tells us to

"Be like the bird, which, pausing in his flight
Awhile on boughs too slight,
Feels them give way beneath him, and yet sings,
Knowing that he has wings."

[Letters for this department must be written on one side of the paper only, and should be addressed to Editor of *The Beacon*, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.]

HAWKILL, DUNDEE,
111 Kinloch Place.

Dear Miss Buck,—I go to the Dundee Unitarian church and Sunday school, and our minister is the Rev. Henry Williamson. I have a very nice teacher: her name is Edith Gordon. She gets the *Sunday-school Monthly*, and we read it. I think it is a very nice book. I also think it a pleasure to read *The Beacon*. There are four girls in my class, and I think they enjoy reading it, too. I am twelve years old.

Yours truly,
ELIZABETH PRIE.

LYNN, MASS.
11 Greenleaf Circle.

Dear Miss Buck,—I have written to you before, but it was a long time ago. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school on Baltimore Street. A little while ago our school had an auto ride. It was a very nice one, too. There were seven autos filled with children.

When we returned, we had hot chocolate and cookies. One night a month last year we had a Sunday school party. First we are shown pictures on a piece of canvas, then we all go down-stairs and have ice-cream and cake, and after that we dance and play games and have a story. Then we all go home. Miss Collins is my Sunday-school teacher. I like her very much.

Sincerely yours,
STUART WEBSTER GRAHAM.
(Age 8.)

LITTLETON, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck,—Perhaps you would like to hear of an entertainment our class gave.

It was an Indian evening. Our minister told a story, one of the girls in our class sang a song, some of the girls took part in some tableaux illustrating "Hiawatha," and last of all, our class did an Indian dance, which was very pretty. We had popcorn, candy, and baskets for sale.

In all, we made about \$28.

This will go to the church for flowers, which are afterwards sent to the shut-ins.

Sincerely yours,
EDNA HARTWELL.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA LXI.

I am composed of 13 letters.
My 10, 11, 4, is used on the floor.
My 9, 11, 1, is a fruit.
My 2, 3, is a pronoun.
My 7, 5, 4, is an animal.
My 8, 6, 7, 13, 10, is not young.
My 12, 13, 9, 7, is not to borrow.
My whole is something we should never forget.

C. E. H.

ENIGMA LXII.

I am composed of 10 letters.
My 1, 2, 3, is a person.
My 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, is a boy's name.
My 2, 8, is a preposition.
My 8, 6, 3, is a number.
My 6, 10, 2, 7, 9, is something we do when we make a mistake in writing.
My 4, 5, 2, 7, is an abbreviation of a boy's name.
My 4, 5, 2, 7, 9, is a game.
My 4, 5, 9, 7, 8, is a heavy box.
My whole is a city in England.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

All the words described contain the same number of letters. When rightly guessed and written one below another, the primals will spell the name of a general, and the finals, a battle in which he met defeat.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. To contract. 2. A fleet of armed ships. 3. Apparent. 4. The answer of a pagan god to an inquiry. 5. To disorder. 6. The hard covering of a tooth. 7. To labor too hard. 8. A papal messenger.

St. Nicholas.

BIRD-GUESSING CONTEST.

1. A flash of sky on wing.
2. Oh, shall I call thee bird,
Or, but a wandering voice?
Thy note from household clocks is heard
And children's ears rejoice.
3. King of the water, as the air,
He dives and finds his prey.
4. Thy plaintive cry announces punishment,
And warns the luckless boy for whom 'tis sent.
5. You introduce yourself throughout your song,
And tell the world your brief, old-fashioned name.
6. "Bob White" you call
Along the marshy coast.
Speak not so loud
Or you will be on toast.
7. Cooing 'neath barn rafters,
Pouting, sometimes, too;
Rippling like child laughter
All the winter through.

8. An English emigrant, bird of the street,
So common that some like thee not at all.
Yet in the Holy Bible we are told
The Father careth if but one should fall.
9. Red-breasted harbinger of spring
We wait in hope to hear thee sing.
10. At some glad moment was it Nature's choice
To dower a scrap of sunset with a voice?

Selected.

A RIDDLE.

I am musical, and many have played me. I may be a long journey. I come in the spring, and I turn things topsy-turvy. I have a loud voice, and sometimes I am cold. Often, however, I bring warm sunshine. The soldiers have known me, and I have led to victory, and I have led to despair.

Youth's Companion.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 29.

ENIGMA LVIII.—Old North Church.

ENIGMA LIX.—

Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

HIDDEN BIRD PUZZLE.—Thrush, swift, martin, nuthatch, heron, finch, merle, stonechat, tern, gannet, snipe, linnet, robin, wren, grouse, lark, tit, owl, hen.

TWISTED NAMES OF WELL-KNOWN PLAYERS.—
1. Maxine Elliott. 2. David Warfield. 3. Rose Stahl. 4. Maude Adams. 5. William Faversham. 6. E. H. Sothern. 7. Julia Marlowe. 8. Viola Allen. 9. Fritz Scheff. 10. Anna Held.

STAIRS.—Cot
cotton
tonsil
silver
verbal
ballot
lot.

Young Contributors' Department.

Open only to members of the Beacon Club under eighteen years of age. Conditions which must be observed will not again be published, but will be sent to any one writing for them and enclosing two-cent stamp.

SUBJECTS.

[Prose offered must not exceed three hundred words; verse, not more than twenty lines. Puzzles must be original with the sender, with no two in of the same kind, and must be accompanied by answers and indorsement.]

Group X. Must be received before June 1.

1. Story or Essay: "My Best Summer Vacation."
2. Verse: "At Grandpa's Farm."
3. Three puzzles, other than enigmas.